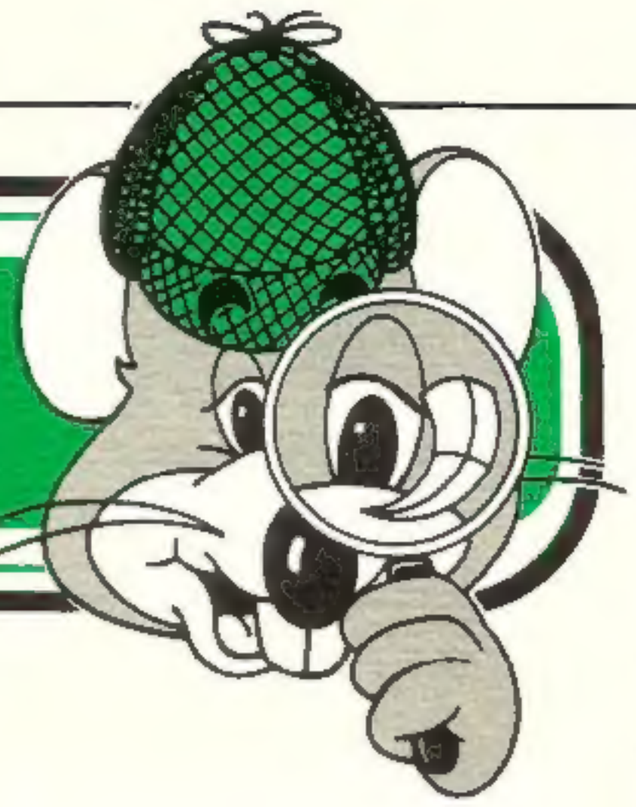
# The Games Examiner



## Cheese E. Street

Developing new concepts for customer appeal and family fun is a continuous and ongoing process at Pizza Time Theatre. One of our latest brainstorms is currently being created by two very adept and creative young men—Kip Atchley and Reed Lawson. The prototype will be a fiberglas Disney-style "store-front" facade with an animated window display of a cheese factory. Inside will be some surprises such as an echo chamber, mirrors in which you see yourself for infinity, telephones that you can dial to hear the voices of Chuck E. Cheese and his pals, as well as mysterious tri-level crawls and passageways. "Cheese E. Street" is currently under production at the Hollister, California Games Manufacturing Plant and will be tested in our Kooser Road, San Jose store.

This project is not Kip's and Reed's first "funhouse" creation. A few years ago, the news media started giving a great deal of recognition to the Haunted House these two had built over the past 12 years on the outskirts of Napa, California. It has been said to be "rivaled only by the multi-million dollar fright at Disneyland." This Haunted House was to be experienced by Nolan Bushnell, whose enthusiasm has prompted our current test project.

Kip will organize and oversee all aspects of development and construction, while Reed will provide all the electronic needs such as sound systems, entry systems, and lighting. A video tape of the project model will be shown at the "Full Speed Ahead" Franchise Convention in October.

# Upcoming Trade Shows . . . Act Now!!!

The two largest domestic trade shows are upcoming on the exact same dates — November 18th through November 20th. They are the Amusement and Music Operators of America (AMOA) and the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) held in Chicago and Kansas City, Missouri respectively.

The AMOA show highlights the latest development in video games, arcade games and jukeboxes. It will be held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel on 151 East Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois.

The IAAPA exhibits outdoor amusement equipment, special attractions (such as ball crawls, bounce floors, etc.), souvenir novelty merchandise and animation. Pizza Time Theatre's Games Division will be showing their Chuck E. Cheese Rolls at this show. It will be held at Bartle Hall, 301 W. 13th Street, Kansas City, Missouri.

As both of these shows are extremely popular, we urge you to choose the show you feel you would benefit most from and make your room reservations immediately. Pizza Time Theatre will have a suite at each show so that we can meet and evaluate the products.

The purpose of the Games Examiner is to keep the Pizza Time community current with new developments in the games industry.

If you have news or information to share, or questions regarding games or merchandise, please contact Inda Trinwith, director of games administration, 1213 Innsbruck Drive, Sunnyvale, California 94086, (408) 744-7300.

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# Fix It Faster

This column is for all the technicians and operators who have pulled a seemingly bad i.c. only to find there was nothing wrong with it in the first place. If you frequently have this experience, you are not alone. Fortunately, we work in an innovative industry which supplies us with extremely helpful tools such as the logic comparator.

The logic comparator compares the output of a known, good i.c. to a possible bad i.c. This is all accomplished while the power on the board is still up, which makes things much easier.

The known, good i.c. of the same type to be tested is inserted into a socket provided on the comparator and a test clip is attached to the questionable chip on the board. The operator then positions switches on the comparator to a predetermined setting. (Popular i.c. settings are usually provided by the manufacturer of the comparator.) The circuitry in the comparator then piggybacks the input information from the two i.c.'s and compares the output. With the same input information, the outputs should be identical. If not, one or more L.E.D.'s will light on the comparator indicating a mis-match.

Occasionally an output line will appear bad because of a shortened input line pulling it down further along in the system. If this occurs, simply cut and lift the pin of the i.c. under test. If it still miscompares, it is definitely bad.

The logic comparator will accurately test devices such as Transistor to Transistor Logic and Diode to Transistor Logic multiplexers, shift registers, flip-flops, adders, decoders, latches and counters, as well as the more simple i.c.'s which include AND, NAND, OR, and NOR gates, inverters and buffers. However, this device is not reliable in testing tristate devices or open collector devices as they may share common bus lines on their outputs. This shared activity would be read as a miscompare.

The benefits of a comparator over an oscilloscope are that it is smaller, faster to use, and does not require as much experience to interpret as does the same complex digital activity read through a scope.

Those of you who have gone through the trouble and expense of replacing chips you thought were bad but really weren't, will appreciate the comparator's verification of good i.c.'s.

Although 100% efficiency is impossible, the comparator has proven to be a fast and effective tool in trouble shooting digital systems.

# Dear Gabby Games

Dear Gabby,

Why should we put arcade games in our gamerooms when videos earn so much more?

A Franchisee

Dear Franchisee,

There are several reasons for providing the mix we have standardized —

1) We are a family restaurant and entertainment center with a market targeted to young children, their parents, and relatives, young and old. We like to provide enough diversity in the gameroom to have something for everyone's interests and skill levels. Leaning solely towards video games limits choices and broad-based player appeal.
2) Video equipment is often unpredictable and very volatile. A high volume current video game may have, in fact, a relatively short life. Continually updating the gameroom with new, hot games and trading in or selling used games needs to be an ongoing priority.
3) Although the highest earning top five video games usually rival the earnings of arcade pieces, arcade games have a long, dependable earning history. They don't peak and drop, but earn about the same amount over the period of years that they are in good operational condition.
4) Arcade games usually elicit physical participation that is different in nature from the kind elicited by video play and, thereby, provide a more active recreation for family members to share.

Dear Gabby,

What are the accepted percentage breakdowns of gameroom equipment?

A Franchisee

Dear Franchisee,

Gameroom equipment is broken into three basic categories:

Videos —which should comprise 60% of the total gameroom mix. Videos are all upright games which have TV monitors.

Arcades —should comprise 25% of the mix. Arcade pieces are all games which are not children's rides (or games) and would include sitdown cabinet style video games such as Turbo and Monaco GP. Upright videos are never classified in this category, however.

Children's—should comprise 15% of the mix. This category consists of all rides and specifically customized games for children (such as Circustime).

Video cocktail tables are not included in the percentages, but are purchased according to space availability and individual store design.

## New Trade Magazines

Several new game magazines depicting game play and current trends can be found on newsstands today. Please find subscription addresses below for two interesting ones which have emerged:

"Joystick"
3841 West Oakton Street
Skokie, Illinois 60076
Price: $3.98 per issue plus $.75 postage and handling

"Electronic Games"
Reese Publishing Company, Inc.
235 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10003
Price: $2.95 per issue; subscription rate: $15.00 for 6 issues

## Pizza Time Theatre's Top 10 Videos (as of 8/26/82)

| | Game | Average Earnings Per Week |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Tron | 315 |
| 2. | Ms. PacMan | 279 |
| 3. | PacMan | 268 |
| 4. | Kangaroo | 266 |
| 5. | S.D. Turbo | 265 |
| 6. | Donkey Kong | 250 |
| 7. | Centipede | 249 |
| 8. | Zaxxon | 225 |
| 9. | Frogger | 231 |
| 10. | Dig Dug | 210 |

# Game Tips

*The following information is helpful in solving problems encountered in the games listed below:*

## Donkey Kong:

Are you having static problems with your Donkey Kong? Some types of common problems that can occur are the screen flipping upsidedown, garbage on the screen, or both simultaneously.

To correct this problem, ground each coin acceptor (using one of the mounting bolts) to the ground wire already on the coin door. Also, a capacitor must be added to the C.P.U. Board. If you have a TKG2 and a TKG3 type logic board, the location for the capacitor would be between pin 15 and 8, but the location is I.C.5H. The specification for this cap is .1ufd with a voltage rating above 5 volts. The purpose of this capacitor is to reduce noise introduced on the reset line by static discharge.

As usual, this modification is not 100% reliable 100% of the time. It will accomplish desired results, though, in most cases. If you find that you cannot control the problem using this method, the manufacturer can provide alternative suggestions. To obtain more information on this matter, call 1-800-426-4612 or write to Nintendo of America, Inc., 18340 South Center Pkway., Seattle, WA 98188.

## Rowe Bill Changers:

The symptom some operators are experiencing with these machines is that they will not accept bills. The problem is usually located in the bill/coin return button assembly.

The button activates a microswitch. If the microswitch bends, it may cause an intermittent switch closure. If the switch is activated, the bull transport will run in reverse. After a short time the motor will overheat and shut itself off through the use of a thermocouple. When the motor cools, it will run properly again. This problem could be very frustrating and can be solved by either changing the microswitch or bending the arm on the microswitch, whichever lends itself to your situation.

# Game Quips

**Greater Southern Distributing Company** of 2164 Marietta Boulevard N.W. Atlanta, Georgia has copies available of *Facts About Video Games and Game Centers.* This brief, but important pamphlet produced by the AMOA, AVMDA, and ADMA will assist you in providing members of your community with a better understanding of the coin-operated amusement industry.

## From ATARI:

## Technical Tips Wells-Gardner Color X-Y Display

**Symptom:** After replacing a shorted transistor in the plus 28 volt power supply (Q100 or Q102), the 5 amp fuse blows again.

**Cause:** You probably have shorted diodes ZD100 and D104. After replacing a defective component, it is always good practice to check all components in the power supply prior to power up.

The same applies to the negative 28 voltage power supply components Q101, Q103, ZD101 and D105.

**Symptom:** Glitches or spikes on video display objects.

**Cause:** Defective components C901 and C902 capacitors located on the circuit board in the high voltage cage. Recommended replacement is a 100 $\mu F$, 50V electrolytic capacitor.

# Games Update

## Some New Games to be Watching for are:

## Jungle King - Taito

He looks like Tarzan, but he's the Jungle King, swinging from vine to vine avoiding monkeys, fighting the alligators, and jumping over falling rocks. He must save the beautiful girl. Rumor has it this is going to be a high earning game!

## Gravitar - Atari

Your mission is to travel to alien planets and destroy them. Each level is a different universe with different planets. Gravity pulls you to the surface of the planet. Your controls maneuver ships to rotate right and left, thrust and fire for shots.

## Donkey Kong Jr. - Nintendo

If you're a Donkey Kong fan, you'll love Donkey Kong Jr. Junior must get Mario's key to free Papa. This game is testing to be our top game thus far.

## Solar Fox - Midway

The object is to clear the screen of fuzor targets as fast as possible, while avoiding the enemy thrustors that move along the playfield's borders. Time and speed are your weapons.

## Fast Freddy - Atari

This game simulates the thrills and skills of actual hang gliding using an 8-way joystick to move Freddy. Good timing and strategy are necessary to successfully negotiate invisible air currents, wind direction, and up and down drafts.

# Jasper's General Store

## Appeal to Emotions

One of the keys to making more money in the amusement field is merchandising. *And* appealing to the consumer's emotional side helps the effort, according to an article by Steven B. Cox and Dr. Richerd Maddock in the August 21, 1982 issue of "Amusement Business."

One good way of appealing to the consumer's emotions is to personalize the experience for him. Enable him to bring something of his experience home with him and you enable him to preserve the positive, happy visit. Being reminded of it by a customized souvenir may just prompt the next visit. Like a photograph, merchandise can capture the memory of a fun time at any family amusement center.

"People love to shop," say Cox and Maddock. A gift shop which carries select, customized, quality merchandise tied to the theme of the business, lends itself to the kind of buying which is motivated by emotion and impulse.

"Moving to gift shop merchandising in the amusement field is one of the keys to profitable survival in the '80s," add Cox and Maddock.

### New Items

Save your money in the new Chuck E. Cheese and Jasper T Jowls banks. These plastic replicas of our two Pizza Time heroes retail for $2.00.
Part No. 940-3061 CEC Bank
Part No. 940-3060 JTJ Bank

Chuck E. Cheese's answer to the rubic cube is a colorful challenge for children of all ages. The cube which features several Pizza Time Theatre characters retails for $1.75.
Part No. 940-3080

# Questions on the Video Game Controversy

As the controversy over the influence of video games on youngsters has grown, more and more psychologists and educators have become involved in studies and evaluations. Some interesting results were printed in the September 15 issue of "Playmeter" magazine. The article, entitled "PR Problems/PR Solutions — what to Say When . . ." encompasses a series of questions and answers relating to negative reactions toward video games. Excerpts from the article have been reprinted which could be helpful in your own response to these issues.

### Question: Do children learn anything from playing the games?

The fact that the games are turning children on to computers has been noted by Midway Manufacturing Co., which has received numerous letters from youths who say they want to go into computer design or engineering as a result of their curiosity about the games.

*Smithsonian Magazine* writer Paul Trachtman, who interviewed Atari programmers for an extensive article on video games (September 1982), reported:

> Everyone here seems to feel that computers are going to play a much friendlier role in our lives than most people ever expected. "People aren't going to be able to be scared of computers very much longer," one young games programmer assures me.

And psychologist Dan Anderson noticed at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, "kids are expressing an openness to learning about computers. They're taking up the university's computer time by writing their own games. A lot of people are attributing this to the popularity of video games."

All of this attention on video games is not being lost on education. A math professor at Swarthmore College has adapted Atari home computers to teach high school and college students trigonometry.

And in his dissertation for Stanford University's department of psychology, Thomas W. Malone studied computer games to see how the fun aspects of the games could be used in designing educational computer programs. As reported in the December 1981 issue of *Byte Magazine,* Malone found three elements of the games that can be used to make education more fun: they are challenging; they present a fantasy situation; and they stimulate and satisfy curiosity. Adapting the games for educational purposes, he feels, "can help in creating instructional computer programs that fascinate as well as educate their users."

### Question: Is it possible, then, that fear of computers, or any new technology, may be behind some parents' objections to the games?

Parents' concerns do have a historical basis, a fear of the unknown that surfaces every time a new medium is introduced into society. The concerns they're voicing about computer games are similar to complaints about television that surfaced when consumers started buying them in quantity.

Because of this fear, psychologist Dan Anderson of the University of Massachusetts feels parents fail to see the rapidly evolving potential of the games: how they will come to be played more at home, how the content will change to provide more challenging games that may be played for hours, and how children can be introduced to computers through games.

Victor Walling, a business consultant at SRI International, a research firm in Menlo Park, Calif., compared kids conquering computers through the games to their parents learning to drive cars. "Kids learn that you can walk up to a computer and make it respond, unlike the previous generation," he said (*Smithsonian,* September 1981).

In a cover story on computers (Nov. 16, 1981), *Newsweek* reporter William Marbach wrote: "It is fascinating to watch how children and adults learn to cope with computers. Almost intuitively children seem to understand that Zen-like simplicity is the key. Few adults manage to attain the same state of grace."

Isaac Asimov, scientist and writer, explained this attraction: "Kids like the computer because it plays back. You can play with it, but it is completely under your control; it's a pal, a friend, but it doesn't get mad; it doesn't say 'I won't play'; and it doesn't break the rules. What kid wouldn't want this?" (*Smithsonian,* September 1981.)

Dr. Lisa Raub, who just completed a dissertation on computer anxiety at the University of Pennsylvania, is even more adamant about the benefits of the games. "There is no question that video games reduce [computer] anxiety and increase technological acceptance," she said (*The Philadelphia Inquirer,* January 24, 1982).

# THE GAMES EXAMINER

(Cheese E. Street Feature)

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